

A SERMON

PREACHED BEFORE THE

House of Peers

ON

December 22. 1680.

Being the Day of Solemn Humiliation.

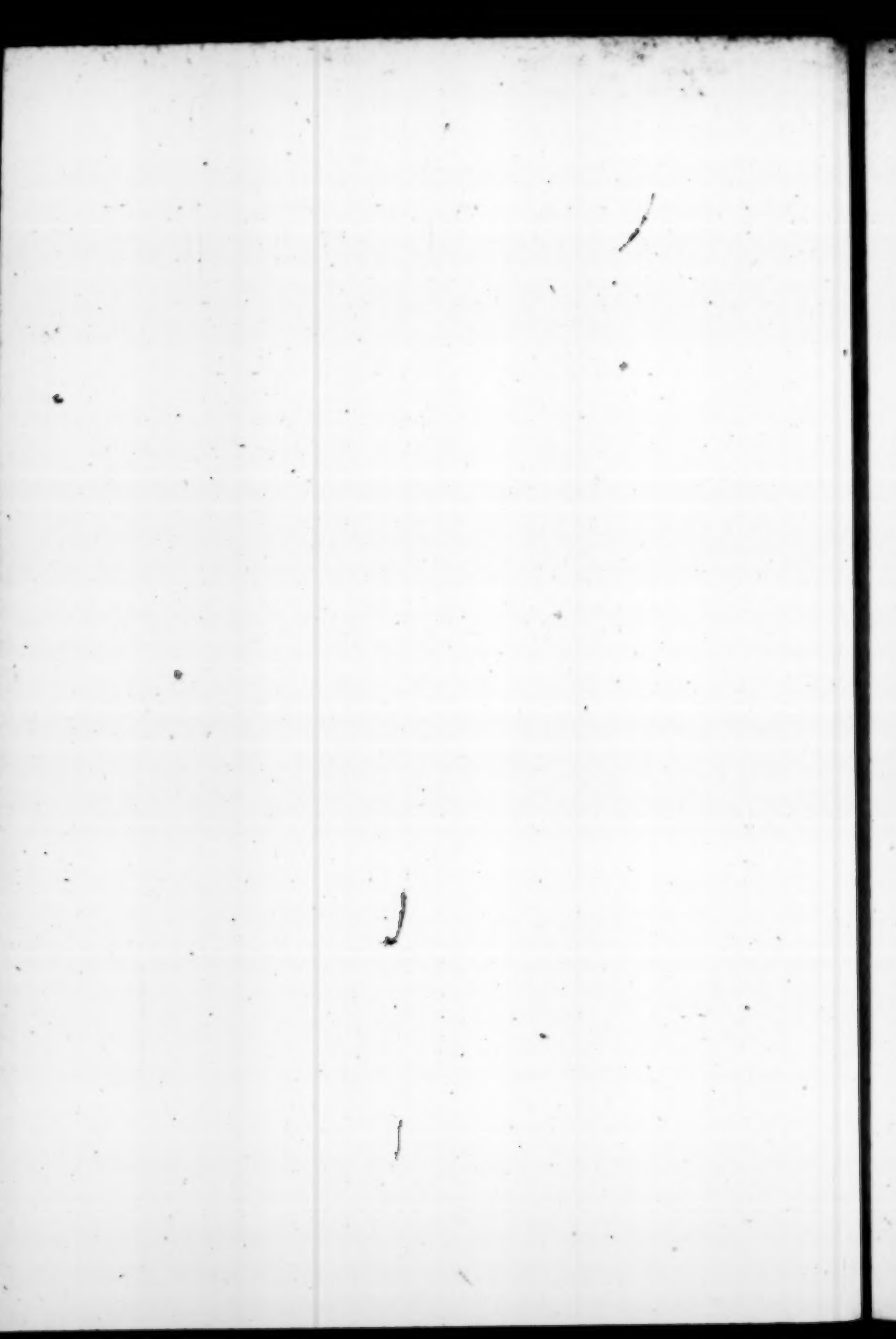
By the Right Reverend Father in God

JOHN

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M A T. 12. 25.

*Every Kingdom divided against it self
is brought to Desolation.*



THE words are a maxime, as most positive in the assertion, so universal in the extent : reading the destiny, and taking in the interests of all Kingdoms whatsoever. Be it the Empire of Almighty God, or that of the Devil ; be it the pious Government of a rightful Prince, or Tyrannous violence of a Thief or Robber. The proposition in all cases remains unmoved. *Every Kingdom divided against it self is brought to desolation.*

Nay more, it obtains in all Societies of men, for it is added; that *every City or House divided against it self shall not stand.*

Our Saviours argument indeed is intended to conclude in the behalf of rightfull Governments,

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and

and do's it with greater force and evidence because it reacheth to the other, *If Satan*, saies he, *cast out Satan he is divided against himself, how shall then his Kingdom stand?* There is, there must be a Beelzebub a prince of devils even in hell; the region of malice, hatred and rebellion, must have some peace and order to support it.

Again he adds, *How can one enter into a strong mans house and spoil his goods, except he first bind the strong man, and then he will spoil his house?* On this account it is that the sturdy Thief confederats with others; obeys command, submits to punishment, defends himself against the Law, by an obsequious violation of it.

God in the frame of man so built him for society, that no depravation of his nature or his manners, can blot out the impressiion. As vertue would communicate, vice would defend it self; and in no condition is it *good for man to be alone.*

We are all born naked and unarm'd, needing the assistance of each other; but wanting strength or weapons to enforce it: but the divine Wisdom has so suited things, that the strong depends upon the weak, as much as the weak do's on the strong: the rich is assisted by the poor, as the poor is by the rich: the wise is aided by the ignorant, as the ignorant is by the wise. The Scepter rests upon the mattock and the spade, and the Throne upon the plough.

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The great animal of a Republic has as much consent of parts, as much dependence of them on each other, as any living creature has. St. Paul at the 12. of the first to the Corinthians excellently describes it. *The eie cannot say unto the hand, I have no need of thee, nor again the hand unto the foot, I have no need of you, but those members of the body which seem to be most feeble, are necessary. If the whole body were an eie, where were the hearing? if the whole were hearing, where were the smelling? and if they were all one member, where were the body? But God has so temperd the parts together, that the members as they have equal use, so they should have the same care one of another; and whether one member suffer, all the members suffer with it; or one member be honord, all the members rejoyce with it.*

The representation of this to the people of Rome, in their seditious departure from their Magistrates, by Menenius Agrippa; perswaded an immediate submission and return. I would to God the truth of the Gospel, would have as just an effect on us, as the fable had with them.

But that rebellion is the sin of witchcraft one would wonder, by what enchantment men should be perswaded to disturb at once their own and the public peace; forfeit all the advantages they enjoy in a settled Government, which cannot be so bad as not to be much better then the confu-

sion which sedition brings, and run upon that *sudden destruction*; which, the Wise man saies, *is the end of those who are given to change.*

War however managed is calamitous enough. When a Kingdom though entire within it self, is divided against another, it generally is bruised and batterd in the conflict, so that the Victor when he *puts off his Armor* has little reason to *boast himself as when he put it on*, But there sometimes both parts survive the quarrel, and the vanquisht are advantag'd by their misadventure, as the Nations whom the Greeks and Romans over-run, gain'd Laws, and Arts and Safety from their Conquerors; but Civil broils can have no triumph, nothing to balance or alleviat their mischief.

Tis a sad sight to see a wounded man besmeard with gore, and faint with loss of blood returning from a Battail; but tis in no proportion so afflictive, as to see one by phrensy, like the Demoniac in the Gospel, arm'd against himself, *night and day ranging the mountains and the tombs, crying and cutting himself with stones, tearing and gnashing with his teeth and pining away, cast sometime into the fire, and anon into the water to be destroyed*: which is the case of a House, a City, or a Kingdom divided against it self.

And this mischief is the more to be feard and carefully avoided, because tis almost in every ones
power

power to work it. One single man has skill and strength enough to embroil a Nation, an Absalom and Sheba did it to Israel, a Gracchus a Sylla and a Marius did it in Rome, and one unquiet Hannibal brought Carthage with the mighty Hannibal, from the height of Empire, to utter desolation. Nay creatures raked out of the dirt can do this. We all remember what a revolution a Massaniello lately made in Naples; and our Stories tell us what disturbances a Straw, a Cade, a Tiler; a Ket, a Simnel have made in this our Country: that I omit the viler names of this our age.

The beginning of strife, saies the Wiseman, ^{as} *is the letting out of water*; a breach which at first might have bin stoppt with a mans hand, suddainly grows wide, and the torrent roul's upon it, and becoms irresistable. We cannot but remember how fears and jealousies emproved in this unhappy Country into a bloody War; and little discontents by specious pretences divided the Kingdom against it self, till it verified the assertion in the Text, and ceast to be a Kingdom, and had not God by miracle interpos'd, had certainly brought it to final desolation.

There has, tis true, past an Act of Oblivion of all these things; But sure we are most unhappy if it take place so far, that we forget what we so lately sufferd, and repeat those mad Divisions which

will most certainly have the same or worse events, then these they formerly procur'd.

Were there not that natural connexion of things, which makes, as we have seen, the ruin of Societies necessarily consequent to divisions in them; had we not fresh experience to back our reasonings: we may consider farther, that God Almighty having said it, he is concern'd in his Veracity to bring his Word to pass, and rather than fail, interpose his Omnipotence to compass it, and *bring to desolation a Kingdom divided against it self.*

And indeed, if we look into the holy Scripture we shall find, that when God designs a judgement upon a sinful people, this is the means he uses, nay this is one great part of the infliction.

At the 19. of Isaiah, he threatens Egypt, that he will *set the Egyptians against the Egyptians, and they shall fight every one against his brother, and every one against his neighbor, city against city, and kingdom against kingdom: and the spirit of Egypt shall fail in the midst thereof; that he will destroy its counsel, mingle a perverse spirit in the midst of it, and cause Egypt to erre in every work, as a drunken man staggers in his vomit.* So we see in fact, Jud. 7. and 1 Sam. 14. the Midianites and Philistins, without any previous discontent or quarrel, fatally engag'd; *every mans sword turn'd against his brother.*

brother. Which state of ruin the Prophet Jeremy calls, *Gods taking away his peace from a people, even loving kindness and mercies*: the giving them *the wine-cup of his fury, which when they have drunk they shall be moved and be mad.*

And now it may be seasonable that we be-
think our selves, and soberly enquire how we
stand in reference to this great concern; whi-
ther we are at peace, or in that state of ruin
which division will certainly infer.

And do's not herein our *iniquity answer to our face*? Is there almost any conversation but un-
der the terms of Faction and Discord? Do's any
man escape the character of Papist, Pensioner, and
Courtier on the one hand; or Common-wealths-
man, Traitor, and Fanatic on the other? Are there
not almost as many Religions, Factions and De-
signs as there are Faces: nay is there not hazard
that there should be more, the same persons in
few moneths running thro several Sects and Par-
ties? Is not the *speaking evil of Dignities*, and
reproching Things and Persons sacred, become
the dialect and language of the time? Is not all
protection and support due from Superiors, and all
submission and industry payable by inferiors, quite
lost among us? Is there any care of the Public either
Interest or Safety? Nay are not all the blessings

we enjoy, forgot and forfeited in the thought of somewhat which we fain would have, or jealousy that possibly we may lose somewhat that we now possess?

This is evidently our case: and do we not see a writing on the wall, like that described in the book of Daniel, *Mene, Mene, Tekel, Upharsin*, that *God has numbred our Kingdom and finishd it*, that *we are weighd in the balance and found wanting*, and that *our Kingdom is divided and given unto Strangers*? We need not look out for a master of Magicians to decipher or unfold the writing, tis so plain that he who runs may read it. This is the Comet that blazes in our Sky; and threatens Ruine and Destruction to us, beyond the abodings of Astrology.

The danger then is sufficiently confest: I wish we were so well agreed upon the remedie. But as it happens in our bodily distempers, so it fares in this of the public, every man is a Physician and has somewhat to prescribe.

And first, tis offerd as of moment to strengthen our selves by Alliances abroad. This were indeed of use in reference unto a Foreign enemy; but cannot obviat the mischief which rises here at home. Tis to like purpose as if for an Impostume in the brain, or Ulcer in the bowels, the Patient should put a helmet on his head, or apply a plaster

a plaster to his breast. Besides, it is not easie to imagine, that any prudent State will think it worth the while, to joyn with them who disagree among themselves.

Secondly, tis suggested that our safety should be provided for by good and wholsome Laws; which might indeed avail, were we in a temper to obey them. As the case now stands, a Physician may as well hope to cure his Patient by writing of long bills, and prescribing several recipes, which will be never taken or regarded; as we expect advantage from the multiplying of Acts. Ill manners are commonly said to produce good laws: but we do not find that the best laws without a vigorous execution; can produce good manners.

But thirdly, there is a sort of men who would commend a more forcible expedient, the security of a standing Army. Empirics indeed, who to cure an Ague think it advisable to throw the patient into a Feavor; who tell us that War is the surest way to keep the Peace. I will not argue how well this method may agree with the complexions of a more Southern climate, it is enough our rougher constitutions will never suit with such a medicin.

A fourth proposal is of those who lay all the blame of our divisions on the male administration of affairs by evil Counsellors, and resolve that if these troublers of our Israel were brought to

condign punishment, all would be well immediately. But the worst ont is, we have a demonstration that this expedient will not do our work; for that we have often shifted those we have most complaind of, but still retaind the same complaints. Besides we see that some of those, who most cried down the evil Ministers as ruinous to the public, and threw the first stone at them, being got into their room were liable themselves.

A fifth proposall is, that liberal supplies be made to cleer the public debts, and support the Government for its honour and defence. This indeed is most necessary to be don. But tis fond to think that this can make a cure. The dying Miser may as well hope for life by applying a bag of mony to his heart, as a sick State expect a remedy from pecuniary supplies. A clock whose movements are decaied, will not go well though the weights hung at it are of Gold.

But sixtly as a Catholicon and sure reserve, it is proposed, to unite the disagreeing interests in Religion. A most desirable design indeed, and likely to be of great effect if it can be compassed. This is a work worthy the counsel and the care of the great Assembly of the Nation, the legislation of Parliaments, and sanction of Synods. In this case, most especially, it may be said, that *God stands*
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in the Congregation of Princes, he is a judge among Gods. And herein the direction of Jehoshaphat 2 Chron. 19. will deservedly recur, Take heed what ye do, for ye judge not for man but the Lord.

Religion like Truth and God himself, can be but one: Even the Garment of our Saviour was so far from admitting a rent, that it was without seam. However similar bodies are multiplied by being broken into parts; in Christianitie, which is the body of Christ the head, what is divided is destroyed.

The multitude of the first Believers were not only of *one heart and one soul*, but *came together with one accord into one place*; and when the numbers of Disciples grew too large for such a meeting, their mutual communication with each other, continued to them still the self same union: and according to the method of the primitive Church. *Totus orbis commercio formatarum, & una communionis societate concordabat*, as saies Optatus lib. 2. *The whole world was united by the commerce of credentiall letters, and the fellowship of communion.*

Abstractedly speaking, It is the duty of every Christian, to communicate in holy offices with every Christian; and likewise tis the duty of every one, to admit all others to the like communion. So that whatever impunity human Laws may give to separation, they can never make it lawful;

twil still be sin though it have the encouragement of innocence.

Indeed Schism is so severely branded in the holy Scripture, that even they who place their Religion in separation acknowledge the guilt of it; and lay the blame of their dissent on those from whom they differ; alleging either the immorality of their lives, or errors in the Faith: and in fine, resolve their separation is therefore innocent because twas necessary.

Hence it comes to pass that notwithstanding the strict obligation to an entire agreement among all Christians; it is not likely, nay not possible to be obtain'd: for besides the ready excuse of casting blame on others, and the perpetual subterfuge, that peace is never to be sought for with the loss of truth; which makes an out-let for all self opinionated men, who will be sure to guild their errors with the name of truth, and make up their defect of knowledge, with abundance of perverseness; there are very many so full of malice, that nothing is so hatefull to them as the name of Peace, so that as the Psalmist saies, *if any one speak to them thereof, they make themselves ready to battel.* But over and above all this, there is upon the part of Almighty God a fatal bar imposd, he having said, *there must be heresies in the Church; and that it is necessary offences should come, that they who are approved may be made manifest.* So

So that they who propose to themselves the uniting either all Christians, or all Protestant dissenters, or those who have even the slightest differences between themselves; will be more happy in the piety of their design, then the success and issue of it.

To speak distinctly to our present case. Popery in its unhappy additions to the *faith once delivered to the Saints*, is a Religion made up of superstition and cruelty, hypocrisy and profaness, of craft and folly: but yet it has not so exhausted the whole nature of ill, but that there are several other Sects pretending to Christianity extremely bad.

And the same principle of duty to Almighty God, that forbids an orthodox Son of the English Church to communicate with Popery, must also as forcibly oblige not to communicate with them; and what we do upon just conviction, every Dissenter is directed to by the sway of his opinion; and will be as little gratified by the widest and most comprehensive Scheme, if it oblige unto communion on the terms which it holds forth, without which it do's nothing, as now they are with the established constitution of the Church.

Indeed our Church in reference to the present state of things, has very rightly by a great wise man bin compar'd unto a fortified Town, and the several

ral denominations of dissenters, to so many Villages about her: now in case of an assault from a common enemy, which God knows lies hard upon us, as it would be a great imprudence in the Citizens, not to give all encouragement to those without, to come within the line, and share the safety of it: so twould be utter madness in the Villagers, to continue still without, or demand that the walls or works should be demolisht, that they might dwell with better ease, or more unto their mind.

When Julian the Apostate labored with all his force and skill to extirpate Christianity, the means he used was to encourage the several Sects of heretics in their differing waies of worship, as we learn from Ammianus Marcellinus a Heathen writer in his 22. book. *Dissidentes Christianorum antistites cum plebe discissa in palatium intromissos, monebat ut civilibus discordiis consopitis, quisque nullo vetante religioni suæ serviret*, The Emperor calling to him in his Palace the heads of the divided sects of Christians, both Priests and People, admonishd them, that laying aside civil discords, every one without controul should exercise his own way of worship. And then adds; *that this was thus diligently don by him, that dissentions being encreased by licence, he might from thence forth be secure from danger of the Christians unanimity; having experimentally found*
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that no wild Beasts are so enraged against one another, as disagreeing Christians. And we know how this very thing, has bin from time to time endeavourd by the Factors for the Roman Church. And it would be exceeding strange if the readiest way to bring in Popery, and extirpate the very being of Christianity, should now be thought a good expedient to promote the Protestant interest.

The practise of our Neighbour State, is indeed urged to shew the safety and advantage of leaving Religion at large; but tis obvious to see what footing Popery has thereby got among them; which their public writings fruitlessly complain of: and what progress other Sects have made, the numbers of Socinians and Jews, and some of a worse mark, will plainly evidence.

When Christianity was lately under persecution in Japan, there were a sort of men that answered they were Hollanders, and so escaped the Test. Were we here professors of that cold complexion; a toleration of all, or possibly of no Religion, might well consist with peace; especially under the guard of a Military force, but they little understand the English temper that think the like indifference will pass with us.

When all is don, there is no possible expedient to heal our divisions, till there be first procur'd a mutual desire to have them heal'd. To this end

it would be of great effect that *S. Pauls* advice should be considered, *That the strong would not despise the weak, nor the weak judge the strong: that the knowing would with meekness instruct those that oppose themselves, and the opposers would lay aside hostility, and receive with meekness the engrafted word, and grow thereby.*

Did men but heartily desire a reconcilment, did they thoroly consider that the *Kingdom* as it now stands *divided against it self* must certainly be brought to desolation, and that nothing but a closure can avert it, how would those differences which now appear like mountains, shrink into mole-hills; and that which we have hitherto taken for *a beam in our brothers eye*, seem scarce *a mote*, and that possibly not in his but in our own? How would the motives of discord and defiance, with which we have hitherto whet our selves against each other, put in the balance with our obligations to charity and love, prove light as air, nay *lighter then vanity it self*? Good God! we have *one Lord, one Faith, one Baptism, one common Hope, one God and Father of all, who is above all, and thro all, and in us all*: and why are we not one among our selves? If we look down to earth, tis curst indeed with Thorns and Briers, but made more accurst by our quarels and contests: if we look up to Heaven, that wide extent is capable to entertain us all;

all; *there are many Mansions*, and those so large as will not fail to fill the most insatiate desire. No place but hell can give us countenance for enmity and strife: and yet the Rebel disobedient man will want a president from thence, for even there the Fiends submit to order and command.

What words shall I take up to enforce upon you a value and desire of peace? Shall I adjure you by all the charms of love, those holy incantations which alone can take away the sting and venom of the serpent, and make him innocent as the Dove? Shall I break out into the rapture of the Psalmist? *Behold how good and joyful a thing it is, brethren to dwell together in unity. It is like the precious ointment upon the head, that ran down unto the beard, even unto Aarons beard, and went down to the skirts of his clothing.* Where it is it perfumes the ambient air, refreshes the whole neighbourhood; nay consecrates the man into a Priest, and admits him to the altar of almighty God. *It is like the dew of Hermon that fell upon the hill of Sion.* It stoops from heaven in soft and gentle emanations, with imperceptible steps; but then displays it self in drops of moisture impregnated with life and fertility: the barren mountains by this culture become fruitful to eternity, *for there the Lord promised his blessing and life for evermore.*

Shall I display before your eyes the infinit advantages of Peace, the ease, the quiet, the contentment of that state, the affluence and plenty which it brings; all that we toil and labour for, either in our own behalf or our posterity? Or on the other side shall I describe the horror and confusion, the rapin violence and blood, which follow strife and discord: call your thoughts over to the neighbouring coasts, harraſt by long hostilities and War; or call you back to the remembrance of your late civil broils, the scars whereof remain in most of your Estates and Families.

Or shall I warn you of your Potent Neighbour, who as your Arms employed against his enemies, have raised him to his present greatness; so now attends and watches till your Arms employed against your selves, shall raise him higher yet, and make a ready way unto his farther conquests?

Or lastly shall I lay before you the obligations of Religion, the *New and Old command*, the dying Legacy and parting gift of your dear Lord and Master, whose Gospel is the *Word of reconcilment*, who himself is love, whose whole design of life and death was Peace; and therewith tell you of a like Potent Neighbour, who intends to build his Babel on the confusion of your Tongues, pursue the Florentine maxim, Divide and Reign; and repete the Roman conquest here, by the same means

means the first was made, *dum singuli pugnant, universi vincuntur*?

If we shall be so false to God and to our selves, to the whole Protestant cause and name, which rests on us as its defence and bulwark, against the inundation of Papal Tyranny, which is now ready to devour them; by our divisions to bring on and entail unto posterity, the servitude of Souls, Estates and Bodies, the Massacres and Devastations, which those architects of ruin have long thirsted to effect, and by miraculous providence, bin hitherto withheld from compassing; we shall, be as the most guilty, so the most wretched nation in the world.

I am faln upon a theme on which it were very easy to enlarge, and while I do so thus in generals, may hope to find a favourable audience. But I come not here this day, and I presume you do not neither, to trifle with your miseries, skin ore and palliat your sores: but in the name and the behalf of God, will attempt to search the ulcer to the bottom, shew each man present *the plague of his own heart, the accursed thing that troubles this our Israel*, foment our discords and drives away our peace.

It is a receiv'd rule in Physic that the knowing the disease is half the cure, in reference hereto I

shall come to a short issue, and to the question *whence are wars and fightings among us*, make a plain answer from St. James, *that they are from our lusts that war in our members.*

And first to take the words in their plain and most natural sense, I may use the reply of Jehu to Joram that askt if it were Peace. *What peace so long as the whoredoms of Jezebel, and her witchcrafts are so many?* Can there be peace in families, when the Whore usurps the place, the affection and support of the lawful Wife, when lust engages in wild pursuits, in quarrels and expences, and wages amidst all a perpetual war in the members?

This is the sin that *takes away the heart, brings to a morsel of bread, gives rottenness to the bones, a reproch and blot unto the name, roots up foundations*; nay as Solomon saies, who made the most costly experiment, *destroies Kings.* This is the sin which as the Apostle expresses it, *takes the members of Christ and makes them members of an harlot, defiles the temple of God*, and then sure nothing less can be expected, then what the same Apostle infers from thence: *If anyone defile the temple of God, him will God destroy.*

Look we over the Annals of the World from the beginning of time unto this present moment, you shall see that there scarcely any where has hapned a great Calamity or fatal Revolution, which has
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not either bin the immediat effect, or at least in a great measure the sequel of this sin.

And if ever uncleanness was the complexion of an age, shelter'd by impunity and great example, till it out faced the day, as if it would no more be thought *a work of darkness*: but filling up the character the Prophet gives of an imperious whorish woman, *has a brow of brass, and knows no shame*, this is the time. *The Princes and the Nobles when they were fed unto the full, then they committed adultery, and assembled themselves by troops in the harlots houses; they were as fed horses in the morning, every one neighd after his neighbours Wife. And shall I not visit for these things saies the Lord: and shall not my soul be avenged on such a Nation as this:* Jer. 5. All the former instances of shameless guilt would be out-don by this one act of impudence, to expect impunity amidst such provocations.

Next to this *lust of the Flesh*, we may reckon those which St. John calls *the lust of the eie, and the pride of life*, the impotent desire of Riches, Plesures and Preferment; those certain parents of Faction and Discord, among men. Besides that wide desires do look for large supplies, which still engage in eager competitions: as a defeat brings rage and anger, and new contentions and designs, so a success creates fresh wants, and keener appetites, and yet more vigorous pursuits;

so that whatever happens, there is an endless circle of rage repining and contest. *We lust and have not*, saies St. James, *we kill and desire to have, and cannot obtain : we fight and war and yet we have not, because we ask not ; we ask and receive not ; because we ask amiss, that we may consume it upon our lusts.*

Till this voracious humor is appeas'd, till that necessity is the measure of our wants, and use the rule of our desires, and the providence of God and his disposal, the certain gage of both ; our divisions and hostilities can never have an end.

But thirdly there is another sort of lust, no less destructive to the interests of peace then the foregoing ; it is that of misguided zeal, which from the authority of St. Paul I must declare to be as errant sensuality, as is that of the stews and brothel house. *The works of the flesh*, saies he, *are manifest, which are these ; adultery, fornication, uncleanness, lasciviousness, idolatry, witchcraft, hatred, variance, zeal, which we render emulation, wrath, strife, seditions, heresies, envyings, murders, drunkenness, revellings and such like.* We might a little wonder to find zeal, which in our world usurps the enclosure of godliness, placed in so ill company, did we not find the same St. Paul, at the third of the Philippians acknowledging that *by zeal* he *persecuted the Church*, and so became *the chief of sinners.*

Indeed

Indeed, as the Apostle tells us, *tis good to be zealously affected in a good thing*, but when tis leavened with pride and singularity, when it becomes embittered, and is that $\pi\alpha\rho\epsilon\varsigma \zeta\eta\lambda\omicron\upsilon$ which St. James complains of, there is nothing in the world more mischievous then it: if any one think otherwise, let him read the story of the Zelots in Josephus, he will be abundantly convinc'd.

This is that diabolical carnality, by which men deflour the Spouse of Christ, and adulterate the Word of God: the leaders wherein are describ'd by St. Paul to be *traitors, beady, highminded, lovers of plesures more then lovers of God, having a form of godliness, but denying the power thereof; of which sort are they that creep into houses, and lead captive silly women laden with sins, led away with divers lusts*. And by St. Jude they are declar'd to be *they who separate themselves, sensual, having not the Spirit*. The Holy Ghost, in his first descent came down in Tongues of fire; and the false pretensions to the Spirit, come with like appearances, even there *the tongue is a fire, a world of iniquity, it sets on fire the course of nature, and is set on fire of hell*, Jam. 3.

Let us not deceive our selves with emty shapes and vain appearances, whatever habit Concupiscence puts on, tho it *transform it self into an Angel of light*, tis still but Lust; and so long as it remains,
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howere disguis'd, we shall not fail of *wars and fightings among us*. *The wicked, saies Isaiahs, are like the troubled Sea when it cannot rest, whose waters cast up mire and dirt. There is no peace saies my God unto the wicked.*

And here tis to be considered that the Apostle do's not say, tis the ambition of the Statesman, the disputing of the Scholar, the faction of the Mechanic, the oppression of the Rich, or disobedience of the Poor, the dissolution of this sort of men, or hypocrisy of that, *from whence are Warrs and fightings*; but saies inclusively to all *Tis from your Lusts*: and till that we do say so too, till each man speaks it to himself, there will be no removal of the incumbent judgment, for that there is not an amendment of the provoking guilt. Let every one sweep before his own dore, and then, but not till then, the whole Street will be made clean.

If then we are in earnest, if really we would have Peace, that there *be henceforth no decay, no leading into captivity, and no complaining in our streets*; we know upon what terms tis to be had. Is it worth the severities of repentance, *the denying of ungodliness and worldly lust, and living soberly, and righteously, and godly in this present world*? Is it worth *the putting off the old man which is corrupt according to the deceitfull lusts, and*
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being renewed in the Spirit of the mind, so as to put on the new man, which after God is created in righteousness and true holiness? if it be, behold the purchase lies before you. Mark the perfect man, saies David, and behold the upright, for the end of that man is peace. Ps. 37. and again; When a mans waies please the Lord, even his enemies shall be at peace with him. Wash you, make you clean, put away the evil of your doings from before mine eies, cease to do evil, learn to do well, seek judgement, relieve the oppressed, judge the fatherless, plead for the widdow. Come now and let us reason together, saith the Lord: tho your sins be as scarlet, they shall be as white as snow; tho they be red like crimson, they shall be as wool. If ye be willing and obedient, ye shall eat the good of the land: but if ye refuse and rebel, ye shall be devoured of the sword, for the mouth of the Lord has spoken it. Isa. 1.

Be thou reconcil'd to the Almighty, he shall deliver thee in six troubles, yea in seven there shall no evill touch thee: in famin he shall redeem thee from death, and in war from the power of the sword. Thou shalt be hid from the scourge of the tongue, neither shalt thou be afraid of destruction when it cometh. At destruction and famin thou shalt laugh, neither shalt thou be afraid of the Beasts of the earth: for thou shalt be in league with the stones of the field, and the beasts of the field shall be at

peace with thee. And thou shalt know that thy tabernacle shall be in peace, and thou shalt visit thy habitation and shalt not sin. Thou shalt know also that thy seed shall be great, and thine Offspring as the grass of the earth. Thou shalt come to thy grave in a full age, like as a Shock of Corn comes in his season. Job. 5. Yet more, the transient Blessings of this world shall be a pledge and antepast of those hereafter; when the pious soul shall be receiv'd into the Regions of eternal peace, when *faith shall cease in vision, hope in enjoyment, and grace be swallow'd up in glory.*

I have hitherto address'd to every Christian man that hears me this day. But now I desire in a few words, to apply my self and what has bin now said, to the Great Audience to whom I am peculiarly sent.

MY LORDS,

You being justly sensible of the Calamitous *divisions* of these unhappy Kingdoms, which if not clos'd must *bring it to desolation*; and likewise sensible how unavailable human counsels are to answer such an exigence, have address'd your selves to him, whose privilege it is, to *Counsell the Counsellors and teach the Senators Wisdom,*

Wisdom: and in a solemn manner, calling to fasting, and weeping, and mourning, and girding with sackcloth, You design to invite the Divine pity and compassion; that we repenting of the evil of our doing, the Lord may also repent of the evil which he thought to do to us, be gracious to his Land and pity his people, even return and repent, and leave a blessing behind him.

Tho, as Job expresses it, *Affliction rises not out of the dust, neither do's trouble spring out of the ground, yet their relief must grow from thence. When the soul cleaves unto the dust, and the body is prostrate on it: When sackcloth is the clothing, and tears are the meat day and night, then is the season for the Almighty to afford his comforts, and his aids, to lift up those that are cast down, comfort them that mourn, give beauty for ashes, the oil of gladness for mourning, the garment of praise for the spirit of heaviness.* When the sentence of excision was pronounc'd on Nineveh; *Yet forty daies and Nineveh shall be overthrowen: and they proclam'd a Fast, and put on sackcloth from the greatest of them, even to the least of them; cried mightily unto God, and turned every one from his evil way, and from the violence that was in their hands: God saw their works that they turn'd from their evil way, and God repented of the evil that he had said he would do unto them, and he did it not.* Jon. 3.

There is a memorable case in the book of Jeremiah, that the Jews in a great exigence, after the death of Gedaliah, and the outrages therewith committed, fearing the anger of the Chaldean Conqueror, applied themselves unto the Prophet, to enquire in their behalf at the mouth of God; who undertakes the agency, and assures them *that whatever the Lord shall answer, he will declare it unto them, and keep nothing back from them:* And they on the other side assure the Prophet, by a solemn vow upon themselves, *that whether it be good, or whether it be evil, they would obey the voice of the Lord, that it may be well with them, when they obey the voice of the Lord:* Yet after all this, when God had returned the kindest answer imaginable, that they should *sit still and be quiet*, and then they should be safe, *that they should then be built up and not pulled down, planted and not plucked up;* this his condition they refus'd, and thereupon fell under his last and heaviest Judgment. Jerem. 42.

I would not be so uncharitable to suggest that this may be our case; that men of Birth, of Honor and Religion, when by their solemn Act they have procur'd a Fast, to atone the anger of Almighty God, and reconcile them to his favour: made an appointment that his Messenger should in his name declare his Will, and thereupon come
publicly

publicly into his House to hear it; which proves to be no more then this, That they should live with the dignity of men, and quit their brutish lusts; should after all, do so false so base a thing, as not act according to the message they receiv'd.

Every one of either House of Parliament, who assented to the Vote for a day of Humiliation; every man who attends that service, has interpretatively said all the words that the Jews did to the Prophet, that *whether it be good, or whether it be evill, they would obey the voice of the Lord.*

And now lay we our hand upon our heart, and seriously consider the exigence and the remedy; the engagement here incurr'd, and the answer we return. What I have said before, I now repete again; and declare as the messenger of God, in his Name and in his behalf; that *Our Kingdom thus divided against it self will be brought to desolation.* I say also, that *Our divisions are from our lusts,* and that only repentance and amendment, can remove either them or the judgments due unto them. In plain terms I declare, that nothing but our religious service, can secure our civil freedom: nothing but obedience to the laws of God, can preserve those of
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the land: nothing but a reformed life, can continue to us the reformed religion. In a word, nothing but peace with heaven, can give us peace and happiness on earth.

I speak unto Wise and Great men; *consider what I say, and the Lord give you understanding in all things.*

F I N I S.